

COMMERCIAL AVIATION (CONTINUED) : WORLD NEWS

Control at Southampton

SINCE April 30 the Air Ministry has been responsible for air traffic control at Southampton Airport. Previously, corporation officials have been carrying out the necessary duties. This is a further move in the "implementation" of the Maybury Committee's recommendation that the Government "should provide, maintain and operate a comprehensive air traffic control organisation adequate to secure the safety of air communications." Air Ministry control stations already exist at Croydon, Heston, Manchester (Barton), Portsmouth and Doncaster.

Atlantic Preparations

ALTHOUGH France has not yet obtained the necessary authorisation from the Portuguese Government for the flying boats of Air France Transatlantique to use the Azores as a stopping place, preparations for trial flights by that route are proceeding and the *Lieutenant de Vaisseau Paris*, after carrying out various tests with Air France's star South Atlantic pilot, Guillaumet, in charge, is being fitted with the new Hispano engines which she will use across the North Atlantic. Meanwhile, Guillaumet has returned to Dakar to resume his job on the South Atlantic service.

London-Prague in 5½ Hours

SINCE May 2 Air France, in co-operation with C.S.A., have been operating two services daily to Prague from Paris and two services in the reverse direction. Air France are using Bloch 220s and C.S.A. Savoia-Marchetti S.73s. The services leave Le Bourget at 8.00 and 15.00 hours. Passengers from London utilising the first of these services must stay in Paris overnight, but if they use the second they need not leave Croydon before 13.30 hours, which service gets them to Prague at 19.00 hours. This is the only afternoon service to Prague from London. A stop is made at Strasbourg, thus providing the first direct link between London and that town in a single day.

Neon Control

ACCORDING to a recent *Notice to Airmen* the strip neon ground lights at Croydon—which, unfortunately enough, lie more or less across the usual blind approach line—will only be switched on when a machine is about to land unless the pilot makes a specific request to the contrary. They will not be switched on for take-off purposes except, again, on special request.

These lights provide a very useful assistance to pilots in gauging their height above the aerodrome when landing at night or in conditions of bad visibility. One or two sections at the north-east end of the strip may occasionally, and for experimental purposes, have green lights substituted for the normal orange lights from time to time.

Gatwick Once More

SOME time ago we published a paragraph briefly describing the way in which Gatwick Airport could still be extended and improved for use as London's terminal airport. Since then the plans have been rather more thoroughly considered and Airports, Ltd., have made some further suggestions.

Their scheme involves the purchase of adjoining land, which is, in fact, for sale, the extension of the present terminal building towards the railway station; the laying of concrete or earth-stabilised runways; and the building of more hangars. In its extended form the airport would have runs varying between 1,800 and 2,500 yards—the latter, in the north-west to south-east direction, to be used, of course, for approaches and landings in bad visibility.

Airports, Ltd., point out that Gatwick is in the best position for Continental traffic, and, with the co-operation of the Southern Railway, would be closest to London in point of time. The surrounding country is comparatively flat, and, as the proposed extension would automatically provide for the cutting down of all trees, possible objections on this score would be dealt with. The company claims that the airport is second only to Gravesend in its freedom from fog. Needless to say, the provision of runways would remove the sort of difficulties which have previously been experienced with soft turf, and it would seem that, in any case, it will be necessary for runways to be laid in future at any airport which is being used by the heavier and faster machines now being developed.

Feverish

NEW regulations, which are designed to prevent, as far as possible, the introduction of infectious diseases into this country through the medium of airborne traffic, will come into force on July 1. In general, these regulations resemble those for seaports which were introduced in 1933, and apply to all Customs aerodromes. Details will be found in the *Statutory Rules and Orders No. 299 of 1938*.

Oslo's Land-Sea Airport

WORK on the new Oslo airport at Fornebu is being speeded up, so that, it is now hoped, it will be in use next summer. So far well over 800,000 cubic metres of rock have been blasted away, while an aggregate of 70,000 square metres of runway and tarmac have been completed. By next summer the area will total 130,000 square metres, and this will mean that the first stage of the construction has been completed. A later effort will be the completion of an adjacent sea airport at Rolfsangen.

R.A.S. Empire Exhibition Service

RAILWAY Air Services' special London-Glasgow service for the Empire Exhibition is proving popular. Operated by D.H.86s, the route gives a tarmac-to-tarmac time of 3½ hours. Northbound machines leave Croydon at 9.30 a.m., arriving at Renfrew at 12.50 p.m., and the southbound service, leaving Renfrew at 8.45 a.m., arrives at Croydon at 12 noon. An intermediate stop is made at Speke, and calls on request are made at Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent. The service is confined to week-days.

New Zealand Correlation

BETWEEN January 16, 1936, and February 25 this year, Union Airways of New Zealand have carried a total of 19,808 passengers on their combined Palmerston North-Dunedin and Wellington-Auckland services. During this time more than 7,000 hours have been flown by the company's D.H. 86 and Lockheed Electras with a regularity percentage of 98.99.

Earlier this year we explained the co-ordinated airway plan now in operation in New Zealand. East Coast Airways, using D.H. Dragons, are operating their Gisborne-Palmerston North run and have just started a feeder service between Palmerston North and Wanganui. Cook Strait Airways, using D.H. Rapides, are flying from Wellington to 'Hokitika', while Air Travel (N.Z.), using two D.H. Fox Moths and a Dragonfly, take the passenger on from Hokitika to the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers.

In the meantime, the Mt. Cook Tourist Co. propose to operate a service from Christchurch to the Hermitage and, according to information from New Zealand, it seems that they may use a Miles Peregrine—presumably one of the two prototypes.

Portugal and Africa

A FEW weeks ago we gave details of the plans of the Portuguese Government air service in East Africa. D.E.T.A. Airways, as the operators are known, already run a service between Lourenço Marques and Johannesburg, and on April 11 the coastal service between Lourenço Marques and Quelimane was opened. This service is being run on a definite schedule with stops at Inhambane and Beira, and the D.H. Rapides leave Lourenço Marques on Mondays and Thursdays and leave Quelimane for the return journey on Tuesdays and Fridays. The all-in time for the run in each direction is about eight hours.

The Johannesburg service, incidentally, has been designed, as far as possible, to link up with the Imperial Airways boat service calling at Lourenço Marques. The D.E.T.A. services leave Lourenço Marques on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, and leave Germiston, Johannesburg, on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Negotiations are in progress with Imperial Airways to arrange the necessary co-operation in case of any slight delay in services on which the connection is made on the same day. The Sunday north-bound boat leaves Lourenço Marques fairly late in the morning so that passengers arriving by D.E.T.A. on the Saturday service will not need to arise at any unearthly hour.

In addition to the four D.H. Rapides, the Dragonfly and the Hornet Moth used by D.E.T.A., three Junkers Ju. 52 are on order. The agents are Parry, Leon and Hayhoe, of 2, Conduit Street, London, W.1.